

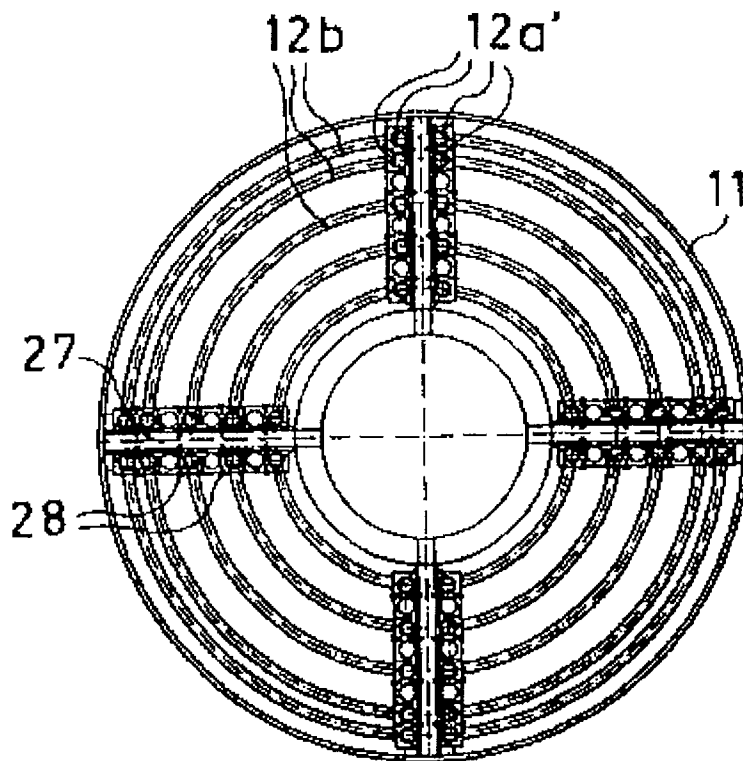
REMARKS

This Submission is being filed under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 in connection with the enclosed Request for Continuing Examination (RCE). The enclosed RCE is responsive to the Final Office Action dated March 17, 2008. Applicants would first like to thank the Examiner for granting the requested telephonic interview on June 4, 2008, and for considering the Applicants remarks during the teleconference regarding the differences between the prior art and the claimed invention.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 – 2 and 5 – 6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,415,527 issued to Rasenen et al. (“Räsänen”). In addition, claims 3 – 4 and 7 – 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Räsänen in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,417,661 issued to Asman (“Asman”). Claim 1 is being amended, while claims 1 – 8 remain pending. Reconsideration and continued examination of the above-identified application are respectfully requested in light of the amendments and remarks herein.

Applicants submit that Räsänen is directed to exactly the type of prior art that the pending claims look to improve upon. In particular, it is noted in the Background section of the pending application that there are prior art continuous steam driers that utilize a series of pipe elements attached to a support structure using a connection allowing heat expansion. *See Specification*, ¶ [0003]. Unfortunately, this results in the steam-containing pipes under pressure to abrade

at the support point and lead to pipe wear. Räsänen similarly discloses that “[i]n the interior of the drum, support constructions **27** have been attached, to which support constructions each pipe element has been attached, for example, by means of screw joints **28** . . . which permit movement arising from thermal expansion of the pipe elements.” See *Räsänen*, col. 4, ll. 37 – 43. Figure 3B of Räsänen, as reproduced below, clearly shows that the screw joints **28** that “permit movement arising from thermal expansion” occur between the axial pipes **12a** and the support constructions **27**. The support construction **27** is then rigidly attached to the drum **11**.



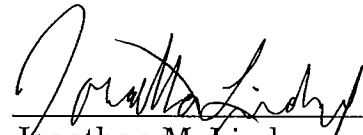
In contrast, amended claim 1 recites that a “support structure [] is structurally connected to the longitudinal pipes and the support structure is attached to the drum frame with fastening that allows heat expansion.” Thus, the “abrading place in the drying apparatus is not an individual pipe but a support structure of the heat transfer element packet, connecting the drum frame with fastening that allows heat expansion,” as expressly noted in the pending application. *See Specification*, ¶ [0007].

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Räsänen, taken alone or in combination with Asman, fails to teach or suggest the arrangement of the pending claims. Additionally, dependent claims 2 – 8 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from an allowable base claim.

For at least the reasons stated above, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1 – 8 be withdrawn. If there are any questions regarding this response or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

Respectfully submitted,

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